

# **Foothill Transit Executive Board**

## **MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Foothill Transit Executive Board was held Friday, March 24, 2006 at the Foothill Transit Board Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 100 North Barranca Avenue, West Covina.

President Lantz called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. The following members were present, constituting a quorum of the Executive Board:

Paula Lantz, President  
Peggy Delach  
Michael De La Torre  
John Fasana  
Lola Storing

Staff and Guests present:

Doran Barnes, Executive Director  
Kevin McDonald, Deputy Executive Director  
Darold Pieper, General Counsel  
Peter Papadakis, Board of Supervisors

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Member Lantz led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 24, 2006**

The regular meeting minutes of February 24, 2006 were approved as submitted.

Motion: Member Delach, seconded by Member Fasana  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were made.

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

### **Contractors' Employee of the Month Awards**

Phil DeLisle introduced and recognized the following awardees:

Joe Renteria, Pomona First Transit Employee of the Month  
Robert Copas, Pomona First Transit Operator of the Month

John Farrell introduced and recognized the following awardees:

Billy Clyne, Irwindale/Arcadia First Transit Operator of the Month  
Kelli Washington, Irwindale/Arcadia First Transit Employee of the Month

### **Perfect Check Award**

George Karbowski, director of Operations & Maintenance, announced that 66 operators received perfect checks in February, and that many others were near the perfect mark.

President Lantz recognized Dan Kirby from Monrovia and Harry Baldwin from San Gabriel.

### **Peter Barron Stark & Associates Presentation**

Jane Flaherty, Senior Consultant for Peter Barron Stark & Associates, noted that for the first time Foothill Transit has conducted an employee opinion survey and that the results were 90% favorable. Ms. Flaherty commended Foothill Transit for its "soft side" in its employee relations and noted that it ranks in the top 20% for workplace excellence. Ms. Flaherty then presented the Award for Workplace Excellence to Mr. Doran Barnes, who accepted the award on behalf of Foothill Transit.

### **Metro Presentation**

Jack Gabig, Metro General Manager San Gabriel Valley Sector, applauded the partnership with Foothill Transit in the renovation and upgrades of the El Monte Station. He illustrated the improvements through a Powerpoint presentation. Over 20,000 passengers connect with 1100 bus trips daily, making it the busiest bus only terminal west of Chicago. Improvements to the station include new color schemes, landscaping, new bus berths, improved lighting and signage, renovation of restrooms, and more convenient layouts of services for commuters. Mr. Gabig thanked Foothill Transit and Bob Arthur for the efforts, time, and resources used to successfully complete the project.

Harry Baldwin addressed the Board and presented a proclamation to Foothill Transit commending their contributions to the El Monte Station project. Paula Lantz accepted the award on behalf of the Board.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

The Executive Board adopted the Consent Calendar Agenda Items #7 – #11.

Motion: Member Storing, seconded by Member De La Torre  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **REGULAR AGENDA:**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS UPDATE**

Bob Arthur announced that escrow closed on March 6, 2006 on the former Washington Mutual Building located at 100 S. Vincent in West Covina, and title has been transferred and recorded in the name of Foothill Transit.

Architectural engineering and design consultants are aggressively moving forward with construction plans for office renovations. The procurement process for selection of the construction contractors began with a pre-proposal site visit and job walk earlier this month. The procurement process requires that contractors submit their qualifications and abilities as specified in the RFP. Proposals are due by April 18, 2006, and those who meet the bidding requirements will be asked to submit bids. An IFB for construction will be issued by May 9, 2006. A second site pre-bid conference will be held May 16, and bids will be due June 8, 2006. Recommendations to the Board for selection of contractors will be presented at the June meeting. The timeline for completion is early December, 2006.

Five tenants currently occupy space on upper floors of the building. Two of those will be relocated to the sixth floor and design plans are underway. Two have voluntarily agreed to close their operations in the building and the other tenant is on a month-to-month lease.

The Executive Board received and filed the report on the status of the Administrative Headquarters.

Motion: Member Storing, seconded by Member De La Torre  
Vote: Unanimously carried

#### **BUS LINE INSPECTIONS**

Darold Pieper, General Counsel, stated that Foothill Transit is purchasing 10 new forty-foot CNG buses and 30 new sixty-foot CNG buses from North American Bus Industry. In order to receive 80% federal funding, a comprehensive bus line inspection program is required throughout the manufacturing process in Budapest, Hungary and Anniston, Alabama. Mr. Pieper presented the options of adding an amendment to the Connex/ATC in-house contract or looking to an outside vendor. Connex/ATC has made a proposal to perform the inspections at a cost of \$42,000, which is substantially less

than the estimated cost of using an outside vendor. Mr. Pieper recommended acceptance of the Connex/ATC proposal.

Member Fasana inquired about previous contracts with Connex/ATC. Mr. Pieper replied that Connex/ATC had performed inspections under the two previous bus acquisition contracts.

The Executive Board adopted the above recommended action.

Motion: Member Fasana, seconded by Member Delach  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **DESTINATION SIGNS RETROFIT PROJECT**

George Karbowski discussed the need to retrofit the TwinVision destination signs with an interface to enable communication with the Orbital TMC Smart*Bus* system and to resolve program language protocol issues. Because of the proprietary nature of the technology, only TwinVision is capable of completing this task. The estimated cost is \$276,000, and funds are available in the capital budget for destination sign retrofits.

Member Fasana asked about ticketing by law enforcement of users of similar LED signage. Mr. Karbowski replied that vehicle code laws still exist restricting the color scheme, brightness, location, scrolling, etc..., but that Foothill Transit is working diligently for changes in the code, and that changes are expected to be enacted by the first of the year.

The Executive Board adopted the Destination Signs Retrofit Project.

Motion: Member Fasana, seconded by Member De La Torre  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **WI-FI DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

George Karbowski explained that this no-cost demonstration by Parsons would provide customer accessible Wi-Fi service on 6 buses. This service would allow customers to access the Internet with a laptop, PDA, or Smart Phone through a stable and speedy wireless connection. If successful, a financially viable business model will be explored to expand the service.

Member Delach expressed her excitement about the project. Member Fasana asked if this service could be used to provide more real time information on transfer points and help implement the Smart*Bus* concept. Mr. Karbowski replied that the project could provide virtually limitless opportunities for customer amenities.

The Executive Board adopted the recommendation to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with Parsons for implementation of the project.

Motion: Member Delach, seconded by Member Storing  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **PROPOSED FARE CONSIDERATION FOR UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS**

Kevin Gano asked the Board to consider waiving fares for uniformed Police Officers, Sheriff's Deputies, and California Highway Patrol Officers. He pointed out that a majority of bus and commuter train systems in California's major urban areas have adopted similar policies.

Member Fasana expressed that approval of this recommendation did not create any expectation of duties beyond the normal hours worked by the Officers.

The Executive Board adopted the above recommended action.

Motion: Member Fasana, seconded by Member Delach  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **DE-OBLIGATION OF MONIES FOR VIA VERDE PARK & RIDE**

David Reyno reported that \$6.1 million had been allocated in 2004 for expansion of parking facilities for the Via Verde Park & Ride. A proposed new parking structure and parking lot at Via Verde Avenue and Interstate 10 have met with local opposition despite the closure of the Eastland Park & Ride and the overflow of cars unable to park in the current facility. In October, 2005, at a community meeting in San Dimas, a majority of residents indicated they were not in favor of the project. The County of Los Angeles and Foothill Transit agreed to discontinue the project. According to federal funding guidelines, the funds must be redirected to other projects or be lost. It is recommended to de-obligate TONP funds to the County of Los Angeles for the Via Verde Park & Ride and place them in the FY2007 Budget TONP line item.

Member Delach expressed her personal disappointment in the community's decision. She noted that "no parking" signs are being placed in the area further increasing the parking difficulties, and cited the need for reduced freeway traffic and emissions. President Lantz noted that the elected officials were on board with the project. Member Fasana pointed out that other sites would be considered.

The Executive Board adopted the above recommended action.

Motion: Member Storing, seconded by Member Fasana  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **CONTRACT AWARD – ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING SERVICES IRVINDALE FACILITY EXPANSION (CONTRACT NO. 06-006)**

Bob Arthur explained that the recently approved "Silver Streak" bus service program

included funds for modifications and expansion of the Irwindale Maintenance and Operations Facility. Four firms from Foothill Transit's list of Pre-Qualified A&E firms were randomly selected to bid on the project. Two of those firms, Jubany Architecture and Williams Chiao Architects, submitted bids. After review by Bob Arthur and legal counsel Ed Gill, it was determined that Jubany Architecture best met the requisite background, experience, and overall objectives of Foothill Transit while providing the best value to the agency based on the project proposal. The total bid including reimbursable expenses is \$344,595.

Member Fasana asked why only the four firms were chosen, and if it might be better to expand the bidding process in the future. Mr. Arthur replied that under the current policy, firms not selected remain in the selection pool for future projects, and previously selected firms are precluded from the process until all firms have had an opportunity to bid. He noted that some firms have chosen not to participate, and that more firms may be invited to join the Pre-Qualified list. Member Delach stated her view that too large a pool may actually hinder the process and that a smaller pool keeps bidding competitive.

The Executive Board adopted the above recommended action.

Motion: Member Fasana, seconded by Member Delach  
Vote: Unanimously carried

#### **SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT AWARD – VOICE/DATE CHANNELS AND BASE STATION EQUIPMENT RENTAL**

George Karbowski stated that Foothill Transit currently contracts with Mobile Relay Associates, Inc. (MRA) to provide radio air time, radio tower, and repeater services. MRA has reserved frequencies in anticipation of the increased needs of the SmartBus system. There is significant justification to remain with MRA, because a delay of up to two years may be incurred to find a different vendor with sufficient frequency capability. It is also critical to the success of the SmartBus system that compatibility and continuity with the current radio system not be compromised. MRA has been a reliable vendor for the last six years. A ten year contract with a five year option at a rate of \$198,253.80 per year (ten year total of \$1,982,538) will include voice and data frequency channels, base station equipment rental, and repeater service

Member Delach expressed surprise over the lack of incremental increases in the contract. Mr. Karbowski stated that the contract did include a 20% increase in airtime costs, and that possible FCC changes in seven years made it desirable to enter into a long term contract. Both parties spent considerable time in negotiations, reaching an agreement that is in the long term interests of both parties.

The Executive Board adopted the above recommended action.

Motion: Member Delach, seconded by Member De La Torre  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **FISCAL YEAR 2007 BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS**

Richard Hasenohrl, Director of Finance, reported on budget assumptions for Fiscal Year 2007.

- Operating revenues will increase 4.25% (an increase of \$673,000). This amount includes slight modifications to the fare increases approved last year.
- Grant revenues are expected to drop an additional \$1.5 million in FY2007 after a \$3.8 million drop in the current year (\$5.3 million, or 8.1% of the operating budget in two years). This is due to the continued effect that Metro's fare reduction had on the Funding Allocation Procedure (FAP).
- Operating expenditures are estimated to increase 12% (about \$7million), with the almost all of this increase occurring in the Operations Department. The increase is due to higher fuel costs and operating contracts:
  - Fuel costs have more than doubled from 2003-2004, and continued volatility in fuel prices makes budget predictions difficult.
  - Cost increases are expected when a new contract is executed for the operation of the Pomona facility. Upward pressures on costs include additional labor to implement the Industrial Welfare Commission's Wage Order 9, increased labor costs to maintain a full complement of bus operators, and technological improvements requiring advanced maintenance and skilled technicians.
- A \$7.8 million shortfall is currently predicted for FY2007. This gap will be bridged by prior year surplus local funds and federal capital funding (preventive maintenance).
- A draft budget will be presented to the Administrative Advisory Committee on April 5<sup>th</sup>, and to the Executive Board on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

The Executive Board received and filed the report on Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Assumptions.

Motion: Member Fasana, seconded by Member Delach  
Vote: Unanimously carried

### **BOARD MEMBER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Member Storing thanked the Foothill Transit staff for their hard work in seeing the new building project through despite numerous difficulties. Member De La Torre concurred and congratulated the staff. Member Fasana also offered congratulations.

Member Fasana took note of an article in the *Star News* regarding the Interstate 10 and 605 interchange. He stated that Caltrans has estimated costs of repairs and upgrades to the South 605 to the East 10 transition at \$65 million, and the costs for the West 10 to the South 605 transition at \$65 to \$70 million.

Member Fasana pointed out that the schedule of complaints is difficult to quantify in terms of repeating or multiple complaints, and suggested a revamping of the format to provide more informative data. Member De La Torre agreed. Member Delach noted that some complaints relate to lack of consideration of traffic patterns. She noted that as a rider she recently waited twenty minutes in downtown Los Angeles for traffic to clear, and passengers complained. She suggested that informing passengers of the reason for the delay might reduce blame and complaints directed at Foothill Transit. Member Storing also thought informing passengers of problem situations would be appreciated. Doran Barnes pointed out that SmartBus will greatly improve communications and provide satellite verification of schedule performance by operators, so that complaints can be accurately evaluated. Member Delach also suggested that provisions to distribute information to passengers throughout the bus would be helpful.

Member Fasana commented that Foothill Transit has improved in closing out complaints and resolving customer issues. He pointed out that certain trends may be discovered through analysis of SmartBus and other data.

Member Delach described her recent trip to Washington, D.C. with Members Fasana, De La Torre, and Executive Director Barnes as interesting and informative. She noted the extensive discussions with legislators and other government representatives on a variety of transit issues, including expansion of the Interstate 10 freeway HOV lane. Member Fasana added his belief in the importance of direct communication with federal officials in obtaining funding, and thanked those responsible for hosting the reception. Executive Director Barnes thanked the members who attended the Washington meetings, and agreed that these trips are productive and fruitful, particularly in a busy time of legislative activity.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Executive Board adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

March 24, 2006